



Sparkling Science > Science linking with School School linking with Science

Research Project

30.11.2008 – 30.11.2009

(Un)Doing Gender as an Integral Principle of Education: Language – Politics – Performance

How gender relations and roles are constructed, designed and lived – an investigation of students and teachers in the context of German classes

LEADING INSTITUTION

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SCHOOLS INVOLVED

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Basic Information about Sparkling Science

Sparkling Science is a research program of the Federal Ministry of Science and Research (BMWF) which started in 2007 and adopts an unconventional way in the promotion of young scientists that is unique in Europe.

The specific characteristic of the program: so far 168* projects (94 of them have already been completed) scientists work side by side with young people in current scientific research projects: Sparkling Science supports big research projects and supported from 2007 until 2010 also smaller school research projects.

In the 114 big research projects (42 have already been completed) the young colleagues take an active part and work independently on parts of the research projects. As junior colleagues they introduce important suggestions into the research approach. They collaborate in the conception and conducting of investigations, conduct polls, collect data, interpret these together with the researchers and present the results at schools, universities and even at scientific conferences.

In a second initiative within the Sparkling Science program the BMWF awarded grants to smaller projects that were submitted and conducted not by the involved research institutions, but by the schools, who designed and lead the projects themselves. In these projects, too, schoolchildren worked closely together with researchers, supporting state-of-the-art research activities and contributing to the results.

Both sides of the program is/were open to a broad thematic spectrum. Research is carried out on all sorts of different topics: from mechatronics and molecular biology to migration research, from acoustics and biometrics to literature research.

* Status quo: January 2012



One Example out of 168

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In this project, high school students worked together with teachers and academics in investigating the construction and deconstruction of gender relations in everyday life at school as well as at university. Developing gender competence, applying critical reflection and acquiring a larger set of methods and approaches were the major objectives of this project. Finally, it wanted to initiate strategies that can make gender fairness and gender sensitivity realizable in schools, which are important social areas.

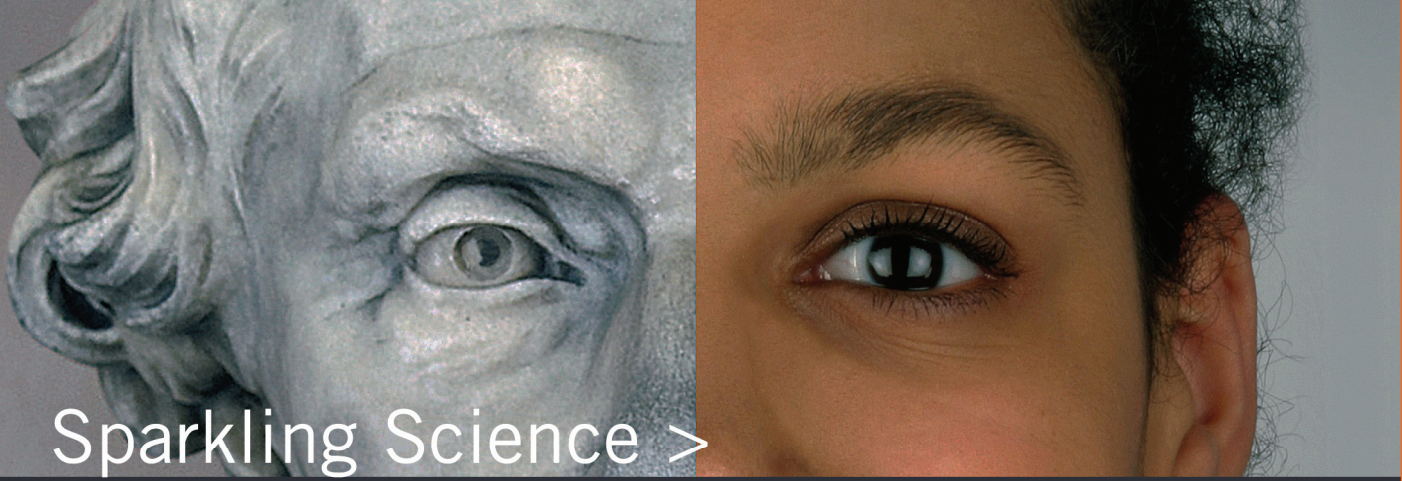
In several modules, academics and students got the opportunity to learn from one another and to do research work in schools and at the University of Vienna. On the so-called Action-Research-Days students have been given new impulses, for example by acting and interacting in gender-scenarios using both the media and the theatre for inspiration.

Another endeavour was the development of a “gender-disc” based on the students’ experiences. Students from the New Design University of St. Pölten co-operated with the high school students and input their expertise. At the end of the project this disc was presented as a new type of teaching material.

The project team co-operated with three Viennese schools: one 6th and two 7th forms. As “(Un)doing Gender” was focussed on language, politics and performance, the interaction among students and their teachers was the central point. Teaching German as a first or second language integrated language and cultural approaches, which made German classes particularly suitable for discussing gender and examining it closely. Philological and didactic approaches have been interlinked.

“(Un)doing Gender” looked into the moments of empowerment of social interaction and put an emphasis on the various ways of transformation. The project was innovative in the action-related and user-oriented approach that it takes thus making students aware of gender roles and gender identities.





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